

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 012606
ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 PRS-01 H-02 SSM-05
SIG-02 SS-15 PM-04 PA-02 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 SSO-00
INRE-00 USIE-00 /082 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:EOJONES:RGH

APPROVED BY NEA/P:GFSHERMAN

S/PRS - MR. FUNSETH (INFO)

H - MR. FLATEN (INFO)

SSM - MR. MC ANDREW

NEA - MS. GRIFFIN

NEA/ARN - MR. REUTHER

NEA/IRN - MR. NAAS

NEA/ARP - MR. TWINAM

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TO AMEMBASSY KUWAIT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE

USINT BAGHDAD IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USMISSION SINAI

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 012606

AMCONSUL DHARAHAN

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
CINCEURCAP GENEVA FOR MEPC DELIGATION, CINCEUR FOR POLAD

UNCLAS STATE 012606

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - JANUARY 18

1.
FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS
FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING FOR
JANUARY 18, 1977:

SPOKESMAN:

I EXPECT THIS WILL BE MY LAST BRIEFING AS SPOKESMAN OF THE
DEPARTMENT. I COULD NOT LET THIS FINAL DAY PASS WITHOUT
TELLING YOU WHAT I REALLY THINK OF YOU (LAUGHTER) AND OF
THIS JOB, NOR COULD I PASS UP THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE A
STATEMENT WHICH I HAVE NOT CLEARED WITH ANYBODY. (LAUGH-
TER)

FIRST, I WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS MY DEEPEST APPRECIATION TO
THE SECRETARY FOR GIVING ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE AS
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 012606

SPOKESMAN AT THIS PARTICULAR MOMENT IN OUR DIPLOMATIC
HISTORY.

SECONDLY, I WOULD LIKE TO THANK ALL OF THOSE PEOPLE WHO
HELPED ME DO MY JOB, AND FOR THEIR PATIENCE WITH ME: I
WOULD ESPECIALLY LIKE TO THANK THE COURT REPORTERS, WHO

ARE NOT HERE (LAUGHTER), FOR SILENTLY AND DILIGENTLY
TAKING DOWN ALL OF OUR WORDS (LAUGHTER) -- SOMETIMES TOO
DILIGENTLY, BUT NOT TODAY; THE PUBLIC AFFAIRS ADVISERS
THROUGHOUT THE BUILDING, WHO DO MOST OF THE LEGWORK AND
DIGGING OUT THE ANSWERS TO MY QUESTIONS AND YOURS; TO THE
USIS STAFFS AND ALL OF OUR EMBASSIES, WHO NOT ONLY
DISSEMINATE WHAT WE DO HERE TO OVERSEAS AUDIENCES, BUT
WHO HAVE GIVEN YOU AND ME VERY FINE SUPPORT AS WE
ACCOMPANIED THE SECRETARY IN HIS DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS
ABROAD.

FINALLY, I MUST PAY SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO MY OUTSTANDING
STAFF WHO MAKE IT ALL POSSIBLE. NOWHERE IN THIS BUILDING
OR IN THE FOREIGN SERVICE IS THERE A HARDER WORKING, MORE
ABLE AND DEDICATED GROUP OF PROFESSIONALS THAN ARE IN THE
OFFICE OF PRESS RELATIONS.

NOW I WANT TO SAY SOMETHING ABOUT OUR DAILY BRIEFING. FIRST, I SHOULD THANK SOME OF YOU FOR KEEPING ME IN TOUCH WITH MY FAMILY WHILE I HAVE BEEN TRAVELING ABROAD, IF ONLY INDIRECTLY, THROUGH YOUR WORDS -- SPOKEN AND WRITTEN -- AND YOUR FILM. MY MOTHER, UP IN WEST SENECA, NEW YORK, IS ESPECIALLY GRATEFUL TO THE TELEVISION NETWORKS FOR RETURNING ME FROM TIME TO TIME TO THE HOME OF MY YOUTH, IF ONLY ON HER TELEVISION SCREEN.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN REPORTERS AND A SPOKESMAN -- BETWEEN US -- IS OFTEN DESCRIBED AS AN ADVERSARY RELATIONSHIP. THAT IS NOT MY DEFINITION, BECAUSE IT SUGGESTS

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STATE 012606

INCORRECTLY, I THINK, THE ATMOSPHERE OF A COURTROOM AND THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PLAINTIFF AND DEFENDANT. AND I DO NOT THINK IT IS FAIR TO CAST YOU IN THE ROLE OF DEFENDANT. (LAUGHTER) RATHER, I WOULD DESCRIBE OUR RELATIONSHIP FOR WHAT IT REALLY IS: SIMPLY, A SITUATION IN WHICH YOU AS REPORTERS ASK THE QUESTIONS, AND IN WHICH I AS SPOKESMAN TRY TO ANSWER THEM RESPONSIVELY AND RESPONSIBLY. IF I WAS NOT ABLE TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS, THEN IT WAS MY JOB TO TRY TO GET THE ANSWER.

I AM ESPECIALLY PROUD OF THIS BRIEFING ROOM -- FOR WHAT IT REPRESENTS -- FOR THE EXAMPLE WE TRY TO SET -- FOR THE REPORTERS WHO OCCUPY IT. THERE IS NO OTHER BRIEFING ROOM QUITE LIKE IT IN ANY FOREIGN MINISTRY ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD. IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT I HAVE CONSIDERED IT AN HONOR TO HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO ENTER THIS ROOM EVERY DAY -- TO TRY -- IN RESPONSE TO YOUR QUESTIONS TO EXPLAIN AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

THOSE OF YOU WHO KNOW ME, I HOPE HAVE COME TO REALIZE, THAT I HAVE NOT TAKEN THIS RESPONSIBILITY OR TRUST LIGHTLY AND THAT WHILE I WAS IN THIS ROOM I TRIED MY BEST.

THANK YOU.

MR. O'LEARY: BOB, I WOULD LIKE TO OBSERVE THAT YOUR THANKING ANYBODY FOR GETTING THIS JOB IN THE FIRST PLACE IS A LITTLE LIKE THE CHRISTIANS THANKING NERO FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO ENTER THE LION'S DEN, SO YOU ARE EITHER THE WORLD'S GREATEST PHILOSOPHER OR THE WORLD'S GREATEST MASOCHIST. END OF OBSERVATION. (LAUGHTER)

MR. VALERIANI: THE ASSOCIATION WOULD LIKE TO HAVE A LITTLE PRESENTATION CEREMONY AFTER THE BRIEFING IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT THE COURT REPORTERS AREN'T HERE.

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 05 STATE 012606

SPOKESMAN: O.K. ANY QUESTIONS?

Q. YES. (LAUGHTER)

Q. DID THE SECRETARY, WITH HIS VAST EXPERIENCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST, ADVISE HIS SUCCESSOR THAT IT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA TO GO TO THE MIDDLE EAST AS EARLY AS THIS FEBRUARY?

A. I CANNOT COMMENT ON WHAT WENT ON OR WHAT MR. VANCE AND THE SECRETARY DISCUSSED IN THEIR MEETINGS. BUT CERTAINLY THE MIDDLE EAST WAS A SUBJECT OF DISCUSSION.

Q. WELL, CAN YOU DIRECT YOURSELF TO THE STORIES TODAY THAT THE NEXT SECRETARY OF STATE PLANS TO VISIT THE MIDDLE EAST IN FEBRUARY?

A. NO. I REALLY THINK YOU SHOULD DIRECT THAT QUESTION TO MR. VANCE.

Q. WELL, SO FAR AS THE SECRETARY IS CONCERNED, WOULD YOU TELL US IF HE IS OF THE VIEW THAT FACT-FINDING MISSIONS TO THE MIDDLE EAST BY A SECRETARY OF STATE ARE A GOOD CAUSE TO FOLLOW CURRENTLY?

A. IT IS NOT A QUESTION THAT THE SECRETARY AND I DISCUSSED TODAY, BUT CERTAINLY ON THE FACE OF IT AND IN PRINCIPLE THIS IS SOMETHING THAT ALL SECRETARIES OF STATE OR ANY DIPLOMAT WOULD SUBSCRIBE TO.

Q. WHAT -- A FACT-FINDING?

A. SURE. AGAIN, IT IS NOT FOR US TODAY TO COMMENT ON FUTURE PLANS OR ACTIVITIES OF THE NEW SECRETARY OF STATE.

Q. WELL, I'M A LITTLE -- YOU KNOW, I GET A LITTLE CONFUSED ABOUT WHAT THE CURRENT SECRETARY OF STATE THINKS
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 06 STATE 012606

IS THE NEXT BEST THING TO DO. THE DRIFT I WAS GETTING FROM HIS MANY VALEDICTORIES WAS THAT IT WAS NOW TIME TO END SHUTTLE DIPLOMACY AND IT WAS NOW TIME TO MOVE TO A FORUM--POSSIBLY GENEVA, POSSIBLY SOMETHING ELSE--AND GET WITH AN OVERALL SETTLEMENT--YOU KNOW, WITHOUT HAVING YOU COMMENT ON WHAT A NEW SECRETARY OF STATE MIGHT BE DOING.

WHERE DOES THE CURRENT ONE STAND? DOES HE THINK IT'S TIME TO FACT-FIND OR SHUTTLE OR GO TO GENEVA--OR WHAT?

A. AGAIN, I HAVE NOT DISCUSSED THAT WITH HIM TODAY AND

SO YOU WILL HAVE TO LOOK BACK ON WHAT HE SAID AND I AM CONFIDENT IN HIS CLOSING DAYS HE IS NOT GOING TO TRY TO SECOND-GUESS ANYONE. HE HAS SAID IN THE PAST, AND WE HAVE SAID IN THE PAST, THAT WE HAVE BEEN ENCOURAGED BY DEVELOPMENTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST -- THAT THERE ARE IMPROVED PROSPECTS FOR PEACE -- AND IT IS UP TO THE PARTIES THEMSELVES CONCERNED TO DECIDE WHAT NEXT STEP THEY SHOULD TAKE--WHETHER IT IS TO GO TO A CONFERENCE DIRECTLY OR TO DISCUSS CERTAIN PREPARATORY STEPS THAT MIGHT BE TAKEN BEFORE A CONFERENCE IS CONVENED.

Q. I'M WONDERING IF IT'S IN ORDER--IF YOU COULD TELL US WHAT YOU'RE PLANNING TO DO AFTER TODAY; AND, ALSO, COULD YOU GIVE US SOME IDEA OF WHAT THE FOREIGN POLICY EXPERIENCE IS OF WHAT I UNDERSTAND WILL BE YOUR SUCCESSOR--MR. CARTER.

A. FIRST, FROM SPOKESMAN I WILL BE GOING TO WORK WITH MR. HARTMAN, THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY IN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS. SECONDLY, I AM NOT GOING TO COMMENT ABOUT MY SUCCESSOR EXCEPT TO WISH HIM WELL.

Q. NO, NO. I MEAN JUST--NOT COMMENT JUST BY WAY OF BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION--IS HE EXPERIENCED IN FOREIGN UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 07 STATE 012606

POLICY OR DO YOU KNOW?

A. HE HAS BEEN EDITOR AND ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER OF A PROMINENT DAILY NEWSPAPER, AND I WOULD THEREFORE ASSUME THAT HE IS ACQUAINTED WITH AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY.

Q. THERE IS A REPORT IN BUSINESS WEEK, AS A MATTER OF FACT, THAT IRAQ AND KUWAIT HAVE MOVED ARMED FORCES ACROSS THEIR NATIONAL BOUNDARIES IN A DISPUTE OVER OIL FIELDS. HAVE YOU HEARD ANYTHING ABOUT THIS?

A. I DO NOT HAVE ANYTHING ON THAT.

Q. NOTHING. THE DEPARTMENT HAS NOTHING ON IT.
A. NO.

Q. ALSO, THERE IS A REPORT THAT, TO THE EFFECT THAT IRAN HAS WARNED THAT FOREIGN OIL COMPANIES WHICH BREAK THEIR CONTRACT FOR PURCHASES OF IRANIAN OIL, AND BUY SAUDI OIL INSTEAD THAT IRAN WILL NEVER SELL THEM OIL AGAIN--I.E., NEVER SELL OIL AGAIN TO THOSE COMPANIES. HAVE YOU HEARD ANYTHING ABOUT THAT?

A. I HAVE READ THE PRESS REPORTS, BUT I DO NOT HAVE ANYTHING OFFICIALLY ON THAT. NO.

Q. IS THERE GOING TO BE ANY KIND OF CEREMONY HERE ON THE 20TH OF JANUARY?

A. ON WEDNESDAY, TOMORROW, THE SECRETARY WILL BE RECEIVING, AROUND NOON, THE ASSISTANT SECRETARIES ON THE 8TH FLOOR, TO SAY GOODBYE TO THEM. BETWEEN 2:00 AND 4:30, I BELIEVE, HE WILL RECEIVE THOSE EMPLOYEES IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT WHO WISH TO COME AND SAY GOODBYE TO HIM AND THEN AFTER THAT HE PLANS TO LEAVE THE BUILDING.

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 08 STATE 012606

Q. WEDNESDAY NIGHT?

A. WEDNESDAY, AT THE END OF THE DAY.

Q. IS THAT HIS LAST?

A. YES.

Q. HE IS NOT COMING BACK HERE THURSDAY?

A. NO. HIS PRESENT PLAN IS TO LEAVE WEDNESDAY AT THE END OF THE DAY, AND THAT WILL BE HIS DEPARTURE FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT.

Q. HE WILL NOT RETURN, EVEN TO PARTIES? FOR THE INAUGURATION?

A. I DONT KNOW WHAT HIS SOCIAL PLANS ARE.

Q. CAN YOU TELL US -- DOES HE LEAVE THE COUNTRY RIGHT

AWAY, OR --

A. HE IS LEAVING TOWN -- I DO NOT KNOW WHETHER IT IS THE NEXT DAY -- I THINK ON THE WEEKEND, AND THEN HE WILL BE OUT OF TOWN UNTIL AROUND THE 1ST OF MARCH. I THINK INITIALLY, HE IS PLANNING TO GO TO NEW YORK CITY FOR A FEW DAYS AND THEN HE IS GOING TO GO ON VACATION.

Q. WHERE?

A. I DO NOT KNOW WHERE HE IS GOING.

Q. WHO WILL BE RUNNING THE DEPARTMENT THURSDAY MORNING?

A. WE HAVE PUT OUT A NOTICE THAT UNDER SECRETARY PHILIP
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 09 STATE 012606

HABIB WILL BE THE ACTING SECRETARY UNTIL MR. VANCE IS

SWORN IN.

Q. HAS ROBINSON RESIGNED?

A. YES.

Q. WHEN WILL YOUR REPLACEMENT ARRIVE?

A. I DONT KNOW, I HAVENT --

Q. WELL WHO WILL SPEAK NOW IN THE MEANTIME?

A. MR. BROWN, THE DEPUTY SPOKESMAN, WILL BE ACTING SPOKESMAN.

Q. HE WILL UNTIL THE ARRIVAL OF HODDING CARTER?

A. YES.

Q. HAVE YOU MADE A RECOMMENDATION ON WHETHER THE PRESS SHOULD FLY WITH THE NEXT SECRETARY OF STATE WHENEVER HE SHOULD GO ON FACT-FINDING MISSIONS OVERSEAS?

A. NO, I HAVE NOT.

Q. DID YOU RECOMMEND AGAINST?

Q. WOULD YOU RECOMMEND AGAINST -- OR TAKE A NEUTRAL POSITION? YOU MADE NO RECOMMENDATION?

A. NO.

Q. ARE YOU GOING TO CONSULT WITH HODDING CARTER BEFORE HE TAKES HIS JOB?

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 10 STATE 012606

A. OF COURSE I AM AVAILABLE TO HIM, TO HELP HIM IN ANY WAY THAT HE WISHES.

Q. HAS HE BEEN UP HERE TO SEE YOU, OR LISTENED IN, OR READ TRANSCRIPTS AND SO FORTH, LIKE JODY POWELL DID THAT ONE SPECTACULAR DAY IN THE WHITE HOUSE?

A. NO, I HAVE NOT MET MR. CARTER YET.

Q. YOU HAVEN'T EVEN HEARD FROM HIM?

A. NO.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY ADVICE THAT YOU WANT TO GIVE HIM? PITFALLS?

Q. HIGH MOMENTS?

A. AS I SAID AT THE BEGINNING OF THIS BRIEFING MY UNDERSTANDING OF THE RELATIONSHIP -- I FIND IT MORE HELPFUL NOT TO LOOK UPON THIS AS A COURT ROOM OR AN ADVERSARY RELATIONSHIP, BUT SIMPLY AS THE SITUATION AS IT IS--YOU ASK THE QUESTIONS AND THE SPOKESMAN ANSWERS THEM -- RESPONSIVELY AND RESPONSIBLY. THAT IS ALL THERE IS TO IT.

Q. THANK YOU, BOB.

, THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION WAS POSTED IN THE DEPARTMENT PRESS OFFICE IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS TAKEN AT THE JANUARY 18 PRESS BRIEFING:

Q. IS IT POSSIBLE TO OBTAIN A COPY OF THE REPORT THE DEPARTMENT IS MAKING TO THE CONGRESS ON THE SALE?

A. NO. THE REPORT IS CLASSIFIED. IT IS CLASSIFIED UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 11 STATE 012606

BECAUSE IT INCLUDES AN ACCOUNT OF CONFIDENTIAL DISCUSSIONS WE HAVE HAD WITH THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT. THE REPORT INFORMS THE CONGRESS OF THE EXPLANATION PROVIDED US BY THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH THEY SOLD SIX AIRCRAFT, FITTED WITH AN AIRCRAFT

UNCLASSIFIED

ENGINE OBTAINED FROM THE UNITED STATES. WE CONSIDERED THE EXPLANATION SATISFACTORY AND HAVE SO INFORMED THE CONGRESS.

Q. IS IT THE DEPARTMENT'S CONCLUSION THAT NO REPORTS TO CONGRESS ARE REQUIRED ON OTHER ALLEGED ISRAELI SALES OF AMERICAN MATERIAL?

A. ON THE BASIS OF OUR TALKS WITH THE ISRAELIS THIS REPORT IS THE ONLY ONE THAT WE HAVE CONCLUDED IS NECESSARY.

KISSINGER

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 22-Sep-1999 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS CONFERENCES, PRESS RELEASES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 19-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE012606
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: NEA/P:EOJONES:RGH
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Expiration:
Film Number: D770020-0538
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770193/baaaevce.tel
Line Count: 427
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 459784de-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 8
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09-Sep-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3681649
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - JANUARY 18 1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND
FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING FOR JANUARY 18, 1977: GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS
TAGS: PFOR, XF
To: KUWAIT TEHRAN MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/459784de-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009